

Lee Center Study Findings

Facilities Design & Construction
Department of Environmental Services

September 2025



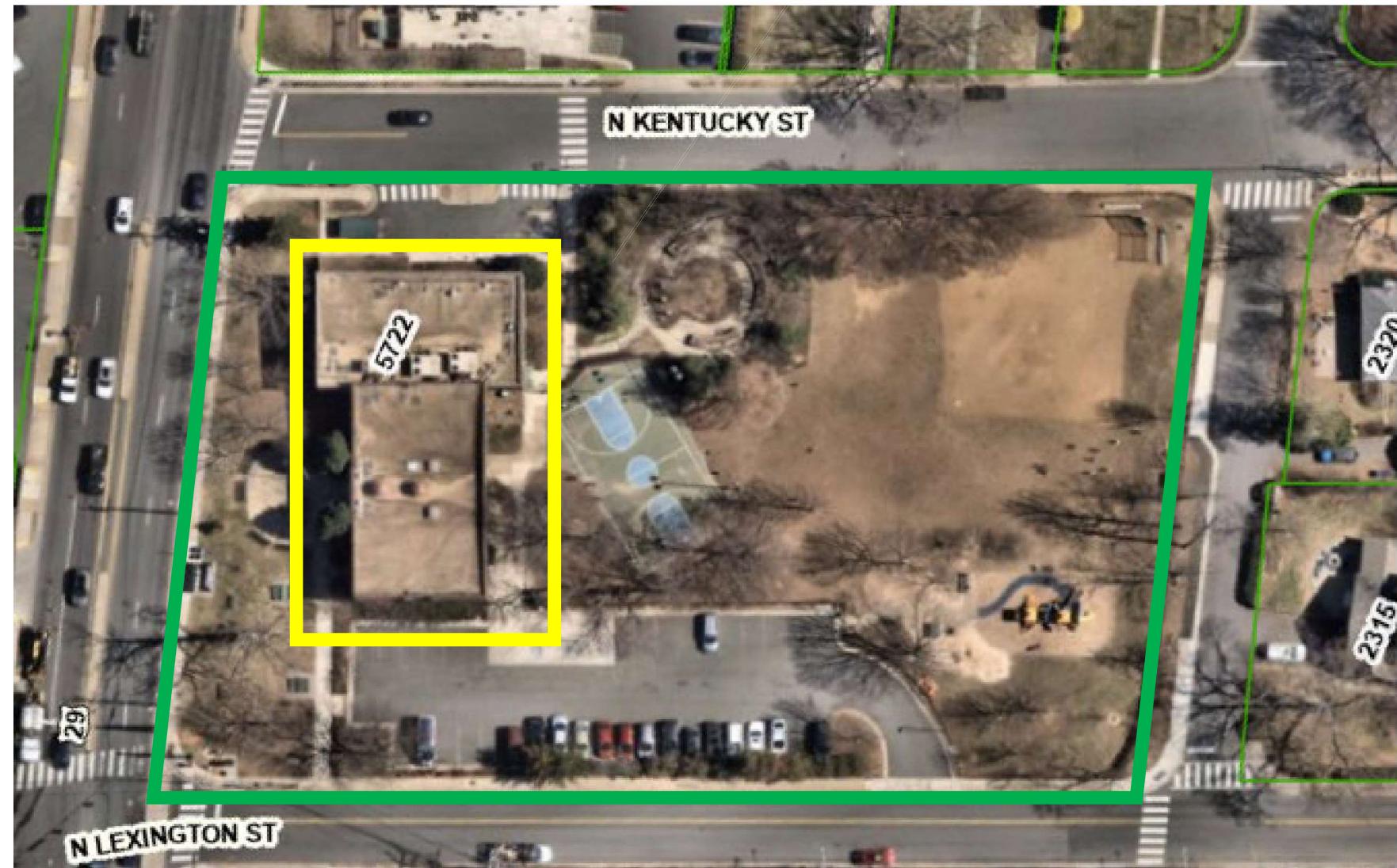
Existing Building and Site

Lee Center Site

5722 Langston Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22207

Includes:

- Building (outlined in yellow)
- Ballfield
- Pollinator garden
- Playground
- Play courts
- Parking
- Greenspace



Notes on the Study (September 2025)

From March – July 2025, Arlington County partnered with the architecture firm CGS to conduct a feasibility study providing conceptual cost estimates for the existing Lee Center building. It explored 3 options: 1) Renovation of the existing building; 2) Selective renovation; and 3) New construction.

- The following slides summarize the **key findings from the building analysis, possible building upgrade options, and other guiding principles** that will affect the future use and possible changes to the Lee Center.
 - Note that this study is not final; the County has an open task with CGS to further refine 3 concepts for more detailed cost estimates.
- **The County has no plans for a formal engagement process at this time but will conduct a broad engagement soliciting diverse viewpoints before any decisions are made about the future of the site.**
- These findings are provided to help inform community conversations about the potential for the site and other neighborhood needs.
Feedback on this study will help inform the future of the Lee Center and be will weighed against other County-wide priorities in the upcoming Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) cycle.

What the Study Did Not Cover

- Future programming at the site has not been determined and was outside of the scope. Any references to programming are strictly notional.
- Funding estimates in the CIP are capital costs only; there is no operating budget available for the center.
- Potential partnership opportunities.

View the study

- [Link to come]

Lee Center Overview

- The Lee Center building at 5722 Langston Blvd. is at the end of its useful life and **necessary repairs will require significant capital investments**.
- **The building is currently vacant** because LAC studios, the sole County program that was left in the building, moved out in July into a new shared arts studios at the consolidated Cultural Affairs building at 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive.
- **No County program is interested in using the Lee Center building in its current condition** in the long-term.
- **A future use for the 2-acre site has not been determined**, which limits long-term planning and community engagement for the building; development will be guided by the 2023 Langston Boulevard Area Plan.
- **The FY25 – 34 Capital Improvement Plan includes funding for the Center:**
 - Placeholder funding in FY31/32 for design (\$1.2M) and construction (\$14.1M), derived from typical square foot costs.
 - \$250,000 for a facility assessment study in FY25; highlights begin on slide 4.

History of Use



- **Elementary School:** 1925 – 1971 (eastside addition added in 1957)
- **Community Center:** 1971 – 2020
- **LAC Artist Studios:** Moved out July 2025
- **Future use TBD**

Community Considerations



While the County has not yet conducted a formal engagement process about the future of the Lee Center, **we have received ongoing feedback from the Langston Boulevard Alliance (LBA) and the Leeway-Overlee civic association about its future use**; including two letters submitted to the Board on July 17, 2025, outlining their two key priorities for the site's future:

- 1. Maintain its existing open space and the building as a community center, with a full or partial preservation of the existing 1925 facility** – noting that the Langston Blvd. corridor has no full-sized community centers and others nearby are small, outdated, or jointly shared with schools.
- 2. A citizen-based task force led by LBA** in collaboration with County staff to determine the use, review proposed changes, and evaluate any future use permit of the site.



A robust community engagement process soliciting diverse viewpoints is necessary but would be challenging to conduct without narrowing down the potential future uses of the building first.

Langston Blvd Area Plan (2023) Highlights

No interim or future use identified

However, the Plan noted that this site could be transformed to include new public uses to serve the growing community.¹

Coordinate redevelopment with the Langston-Brown Community Center (LBCC)

Adapt both sites, 1-mile apart, to meet future needs for schools, recreation, social interaction, and increased housing supply for low- and moderate- income residents.^{2, 7}

No additional community centers needed

While the Plan calls for a community center on Langston Blvd (now served by LBCC),⁷ it references the 2019 [Public Spaces Master Plan](#) recommendation to consolidate community centers and activities into fewer, larger recreation centers.³

Several additional development considerations:

- Allow for the **flexibility** to respond to population growth and demographic change over time¹
- Emphasis on **co-location and consolidation with other uses**³
- Enhance and maintain **public space, natural resources and stormwater facilities**^{4, 5, 6}

Potential future uses referenced in the Plan^{2, 7}

- **Library services** (the only new public facility listed in the plan)
- Affordable housing through a public-private partnership
- Private arts and cultural programs
- Childcare facilities
- County offices
- Multi-purpose spaces
- School needs

Key Findings from the Study

The County engaged CGS architects to conduct a study of the existing building and land parcel and evaluate three potential options: renovation of existing building, selective renovation, and new construction.

Recommended areas for improvement

- **Site:** Improvement needed for accessibility, code compliance, repair
- **Building Envelope:** Foundations, exterior (masonry) walls, openings (glazing and doors), roof
- **Building Systems:** Mechanical, plumbing, electrical, elevator, fire
- **Building:** Accessibility, fit out, finishes, other

Still in good condition

- **Foundation:** No significant signs of distress based on visual inspection

Zoning Analysis

- **Current Zoning:** S-3A for Special District
- **By-right uses:** Single family dwellings and community facilities
- **Other uses** (e.g., multifamily dwellings): Require a Zoning Administrator determination
- Re-zoning would require a site plan and/or use permit approval process

Cost Constraints

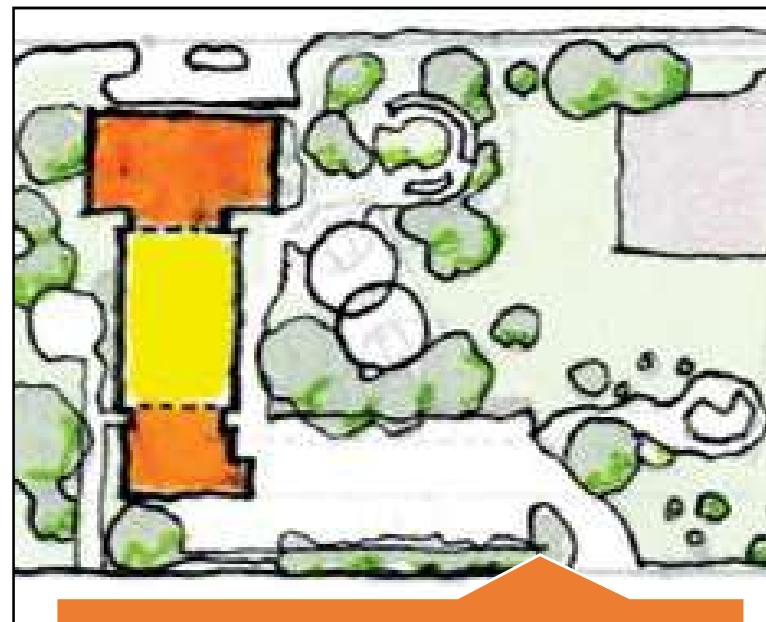
- A formal community engagement process was not conducted before the study began, so community-wide interests are largely unknown. Further, without an identified likely or prospective future use(s) of the building/site, **recommendations are estimates only and do not provide costs for programmatic construction needs.**
- The findings do not account for the costs of specific upgrades to meet County goals, such as energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling.
- Lastly, costs are rough order of magnitude estimates provided by CGS and have not been vetted by the County. Costs will likely be higher for all options based on recent market conditions.

Summary of Options



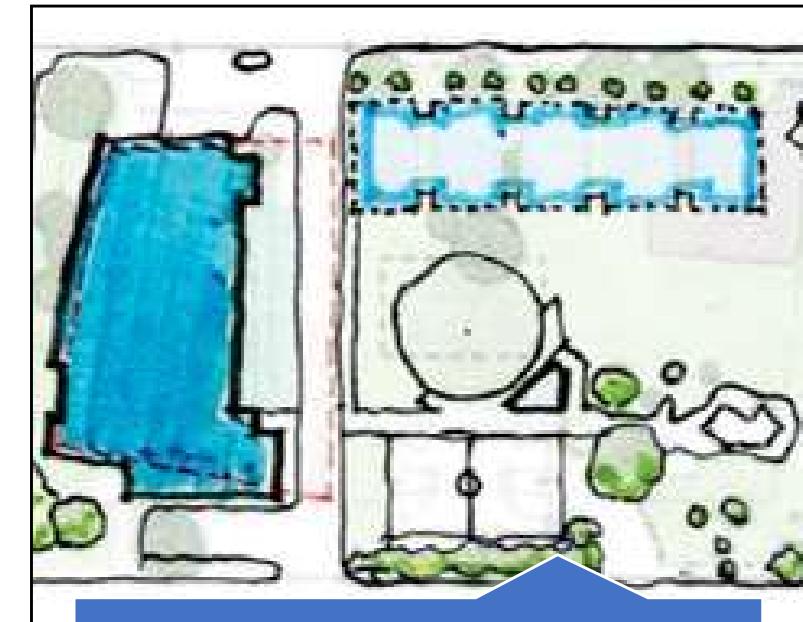
Option 1
Estimated Project Cost: \$6.2M
Area: 15,790 GSF

Retain/renovate to align with contemporary code needs and minimize impact on open space



Option 2 A or B
Estimated: \$10.9M or \$15.1M
Area: 15,790 – 24,070 GSF

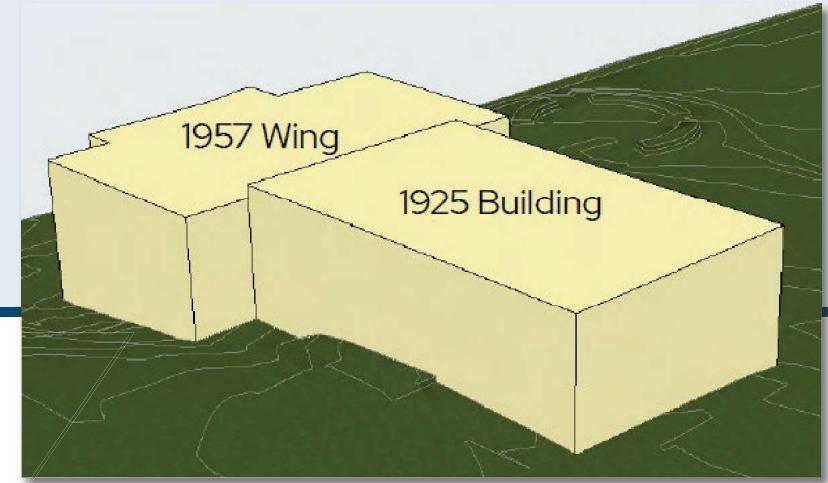
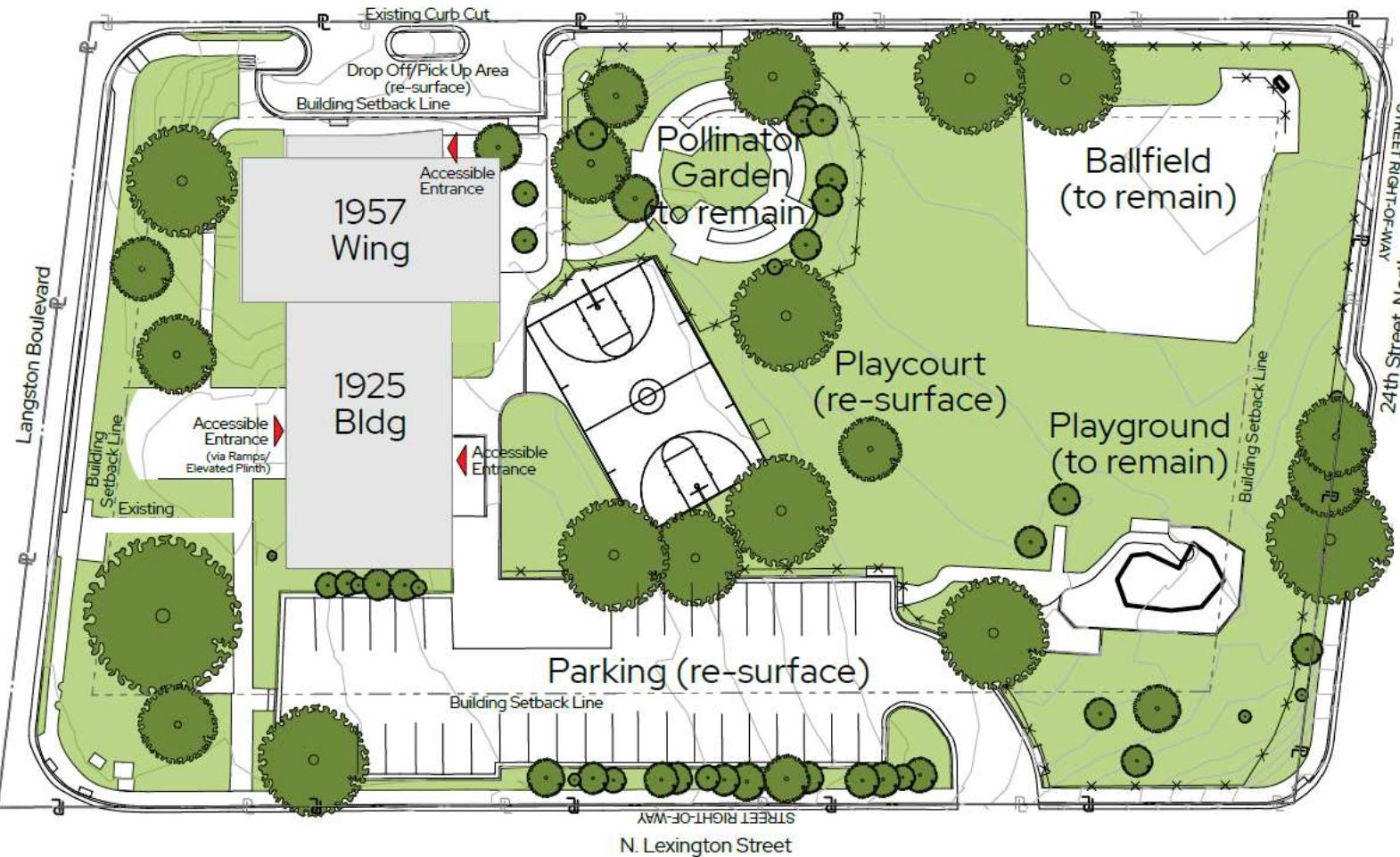
Retain 1925 facades, with limited expansion along Langston Blvd to enhance range/flexibility of uses



Option 3 A, B, C, or D
Estimated: \$26.9M – \$58.5M
Area: 56,990 – 128,345 GSF

Replace with all new construction to better anticipate and address evolving community needs

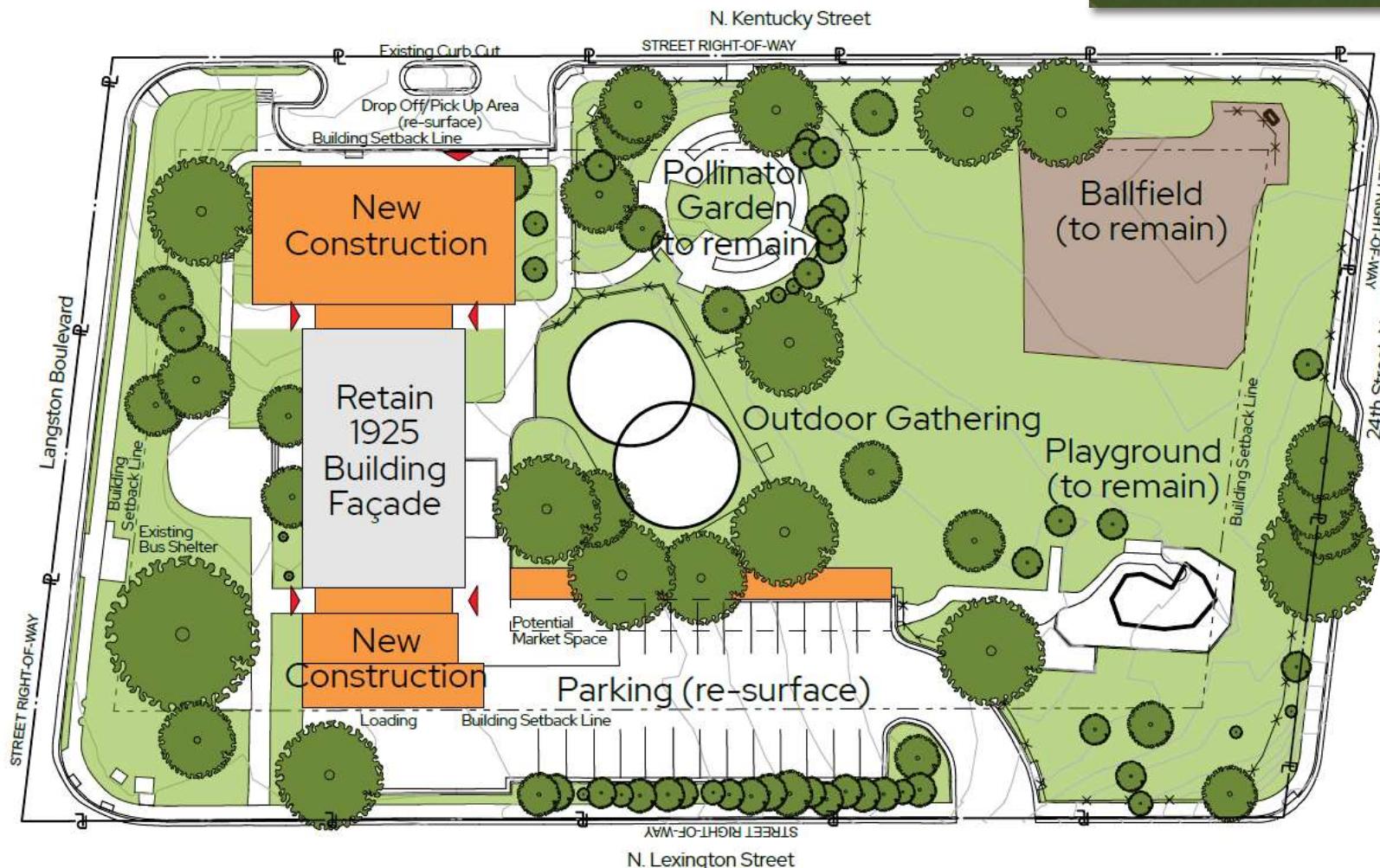
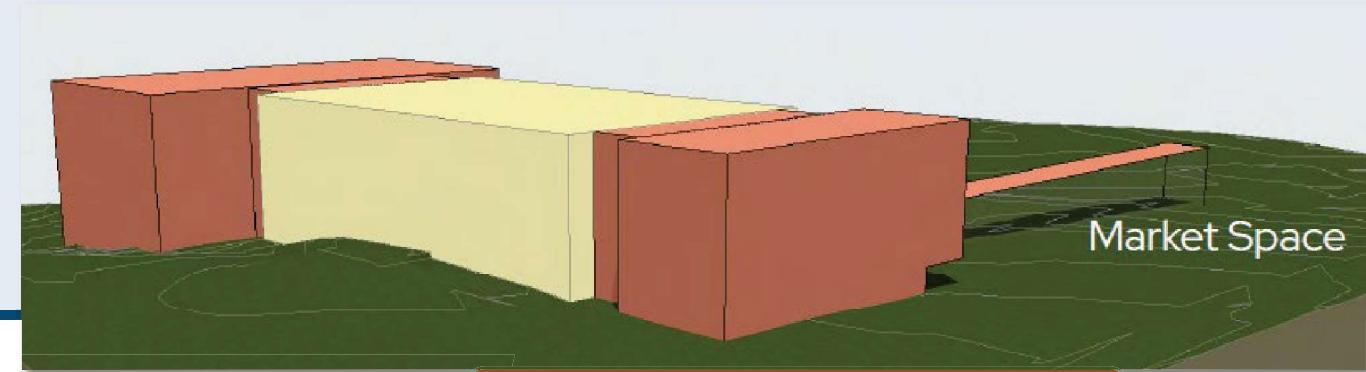
Option 1



Key Priorities

- **Estimate: \$6.2 M / Area: 15,790 GSF**
- Preserve and restore legacy features (restore look and feel of building)
- Enhance accessibility
- Upgrade systems, modernize interiors
- Minimize construction impacts, cost
- Preserve open spaces
- Explore stormwater retention options

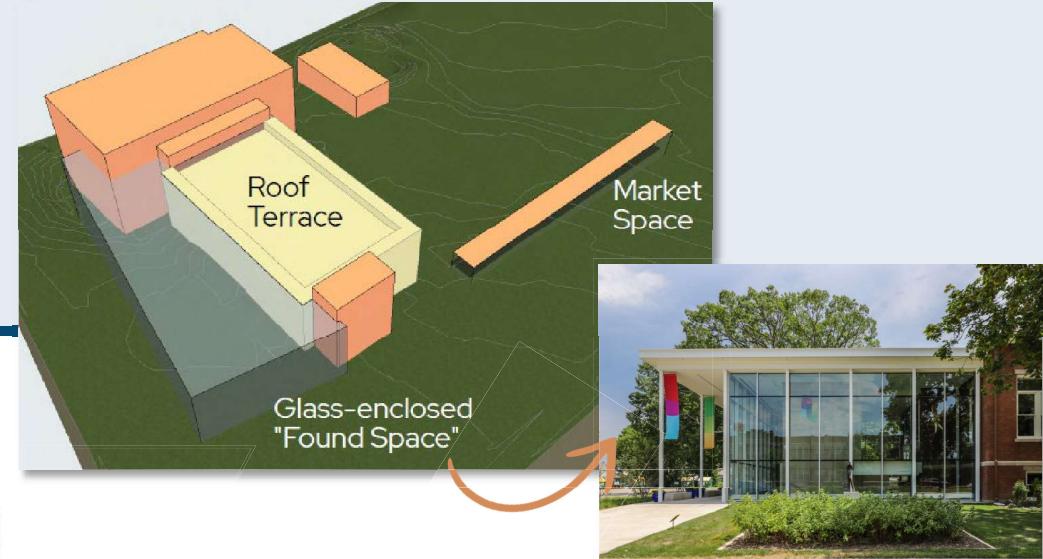
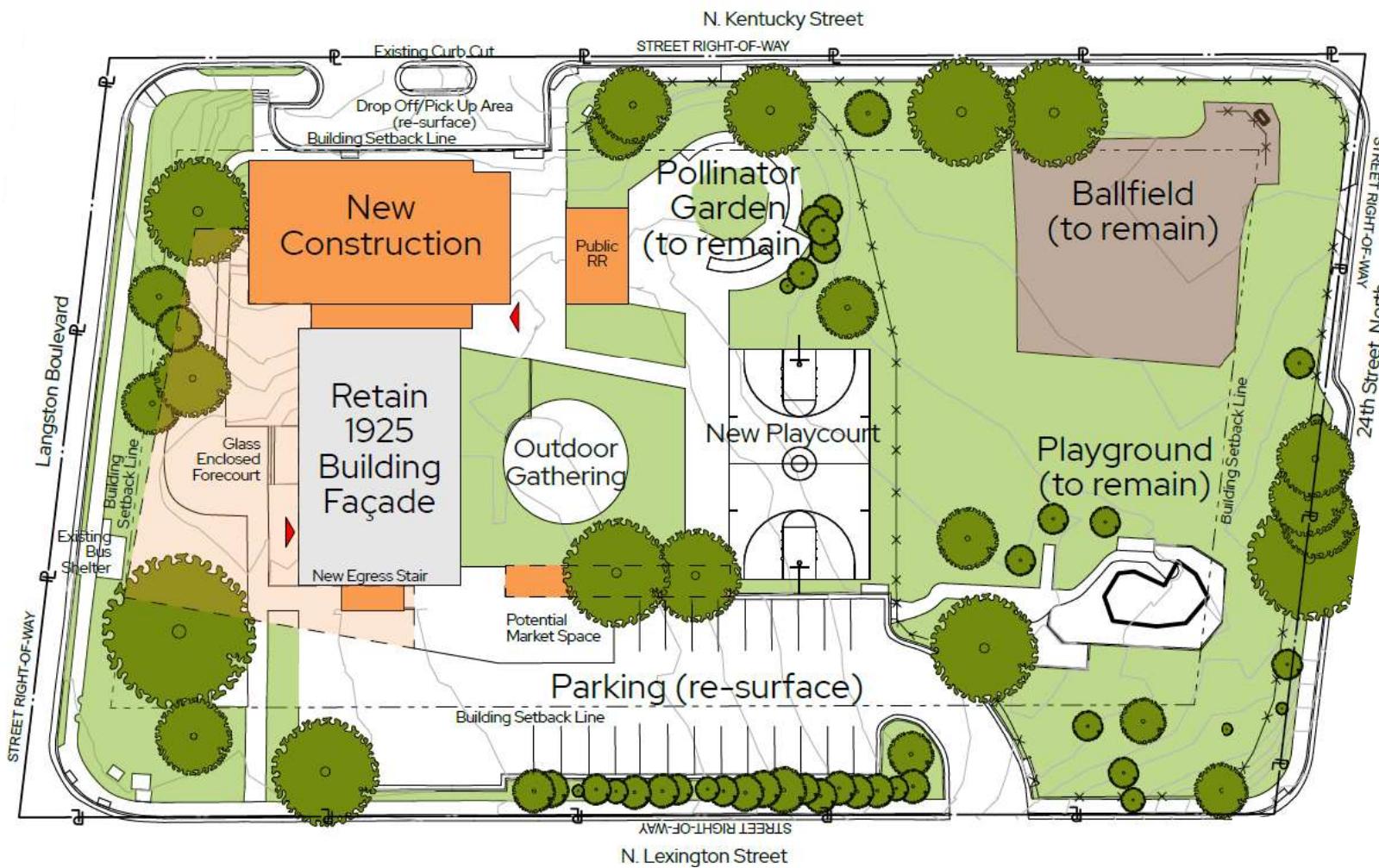
Option 2A



Key Priorities

- **Estimate: \$10.9M / Area: 17,925 GSF**
- Re-imagine per contemporary needs
- Update with a bright modern extension
- Enhance accessibility
- Upgrade systems, modernize interiors
- Replace outdated, and restrictive interior elements
- Preserve open spaces
- Maximize stormwater retention
- Consider geothermal opportunities

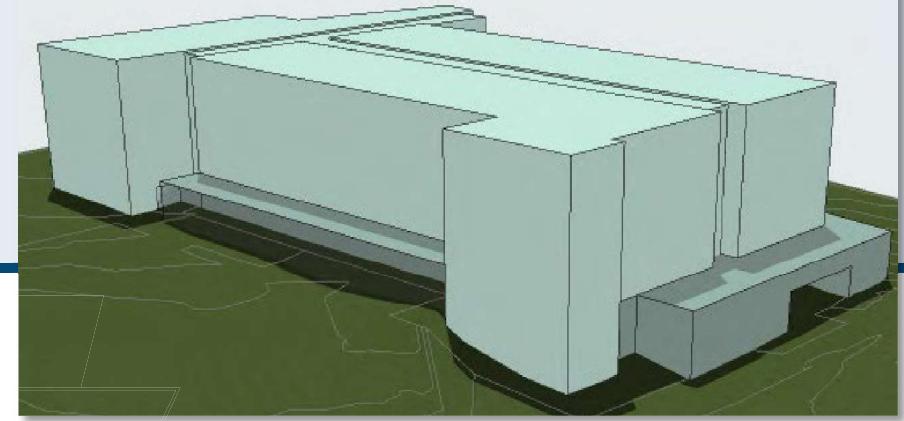
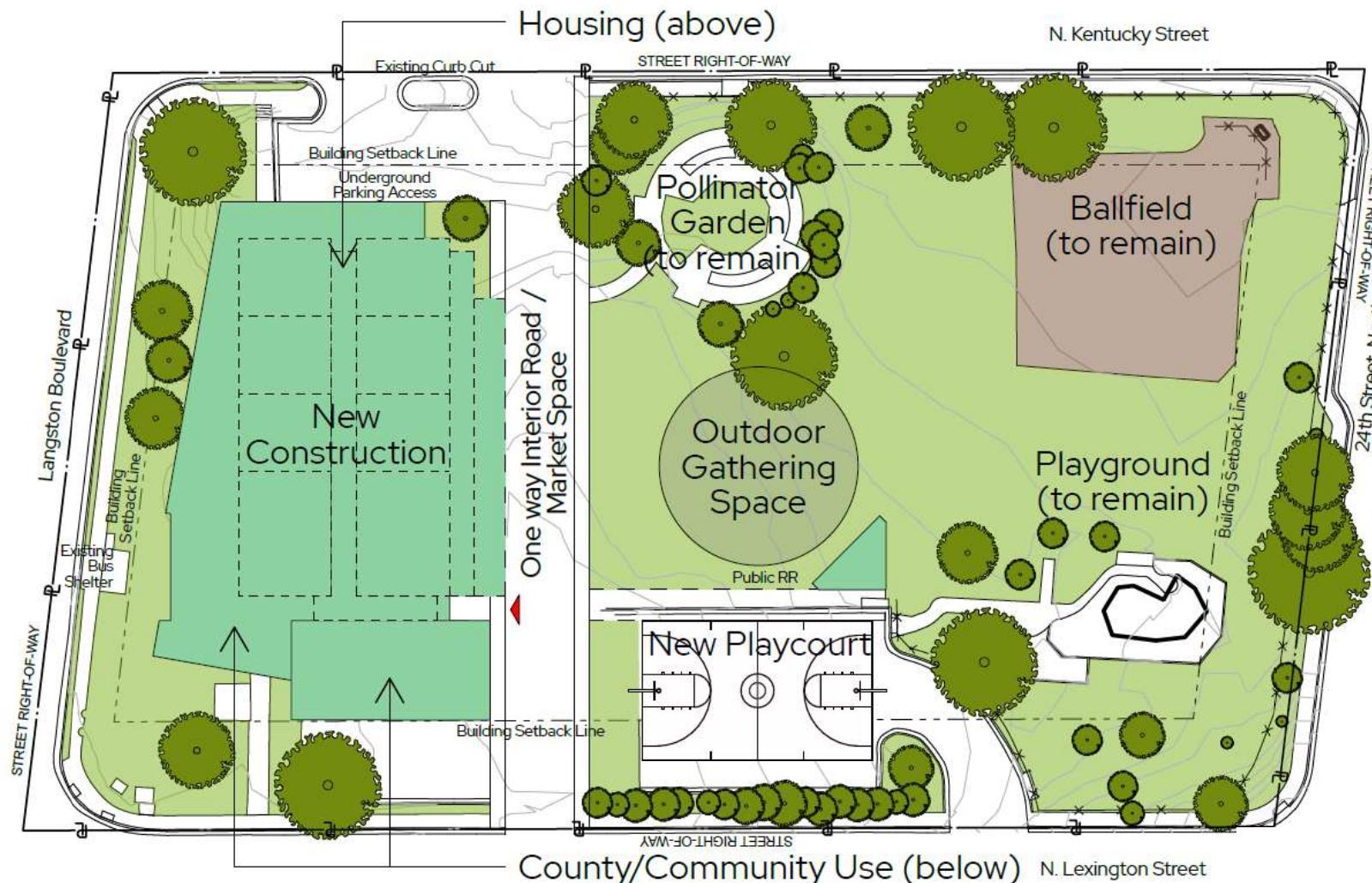
Option 2B



Key Priorities

- **Estimate: \$15.1M / Area: 24,070 GSF**
- Preserve and restore legacy features (restore look and feel of building)
- Enhance accessibility
- Upgrade systems, modernize interiors
- Minimize construction impacts, cost
- Preserve open spaces
- Explore stormwater retention options

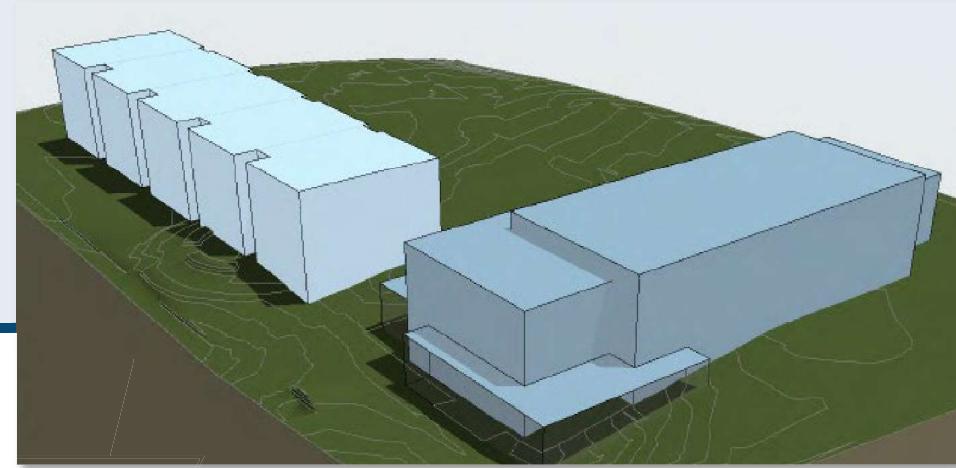
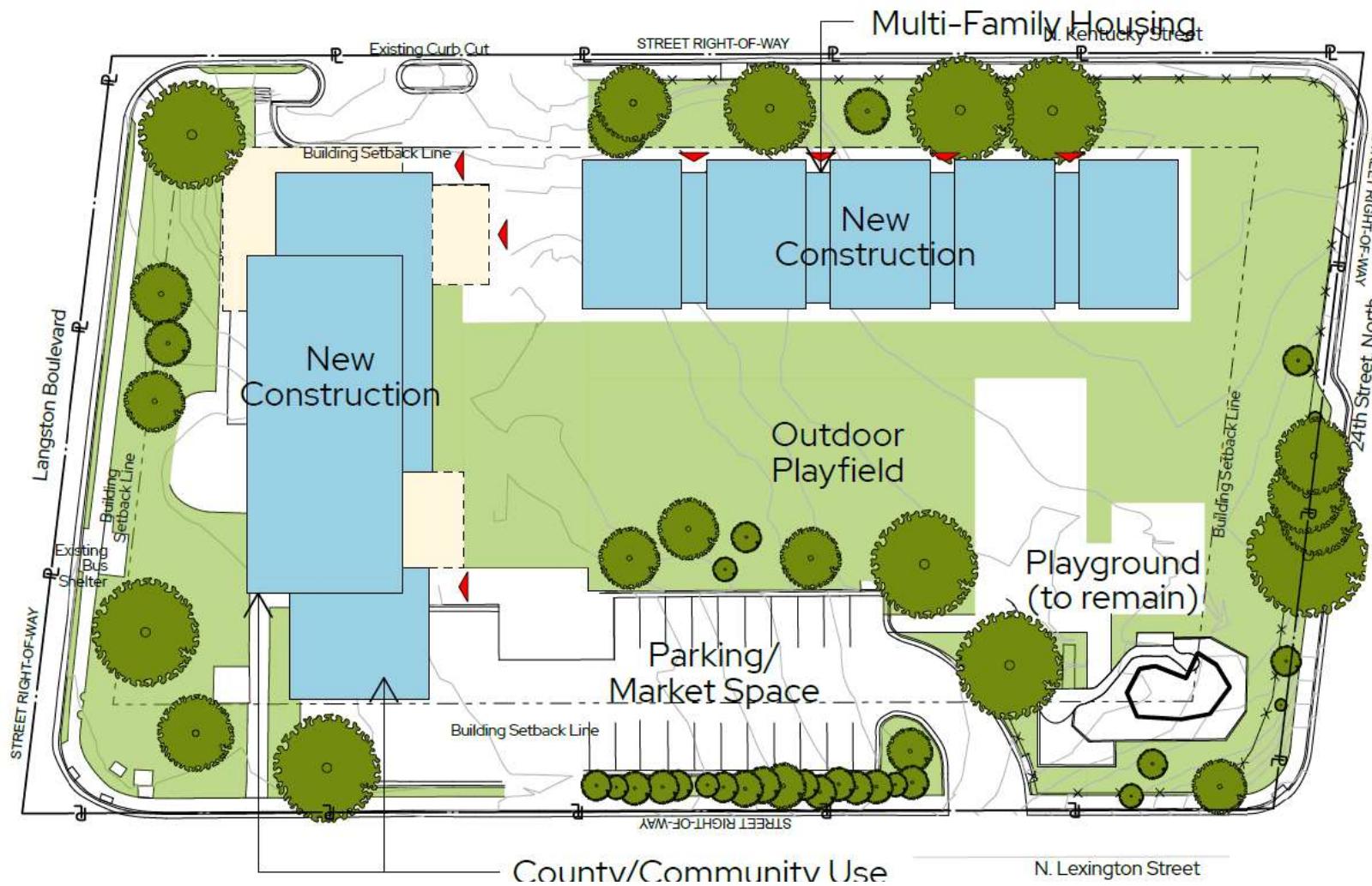
Option 3A



Key Priorities

- **Estimate: \$26.9M / Area: 56,990 GSF**
- All new construction, to best reflect County/community, contemporary and generational needs
- Preserve open spaces
- Maximize stormwater retention
- Consider geothermal opportunities

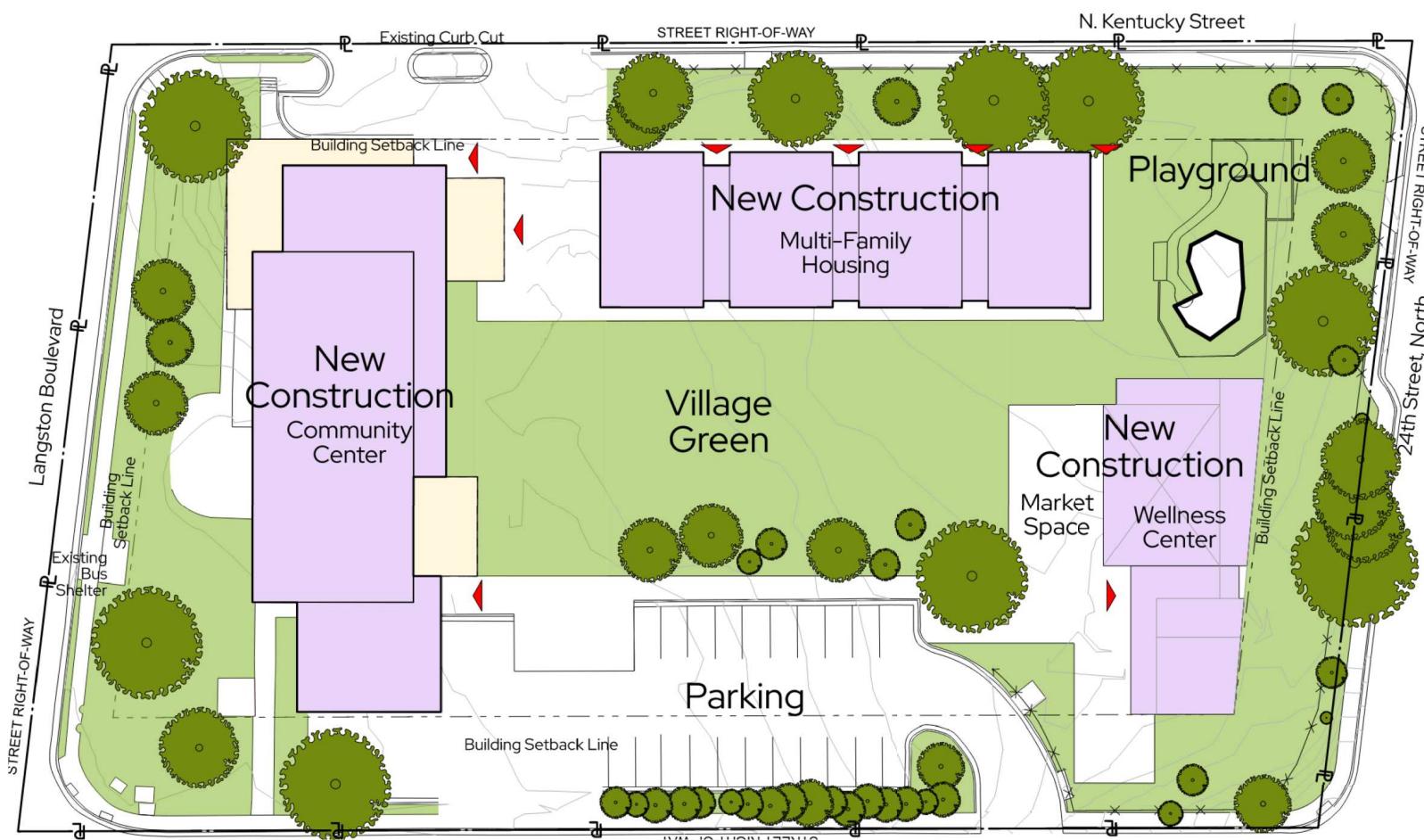
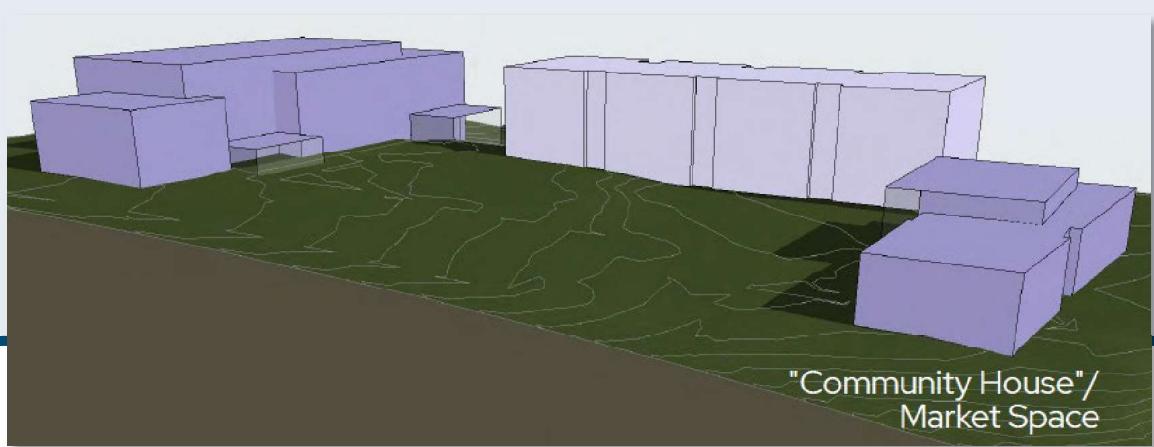
Option 3B



Key Priorities

- **Estimate: \$38.5M / Area: 58,965 GSF**
- All new construction, to best reflect County/ community, contemporary and generational needs
- Provide affordable housing
- Balance built/open spaces
- Maximize stormwater retention
- Consider geothermal opportunities

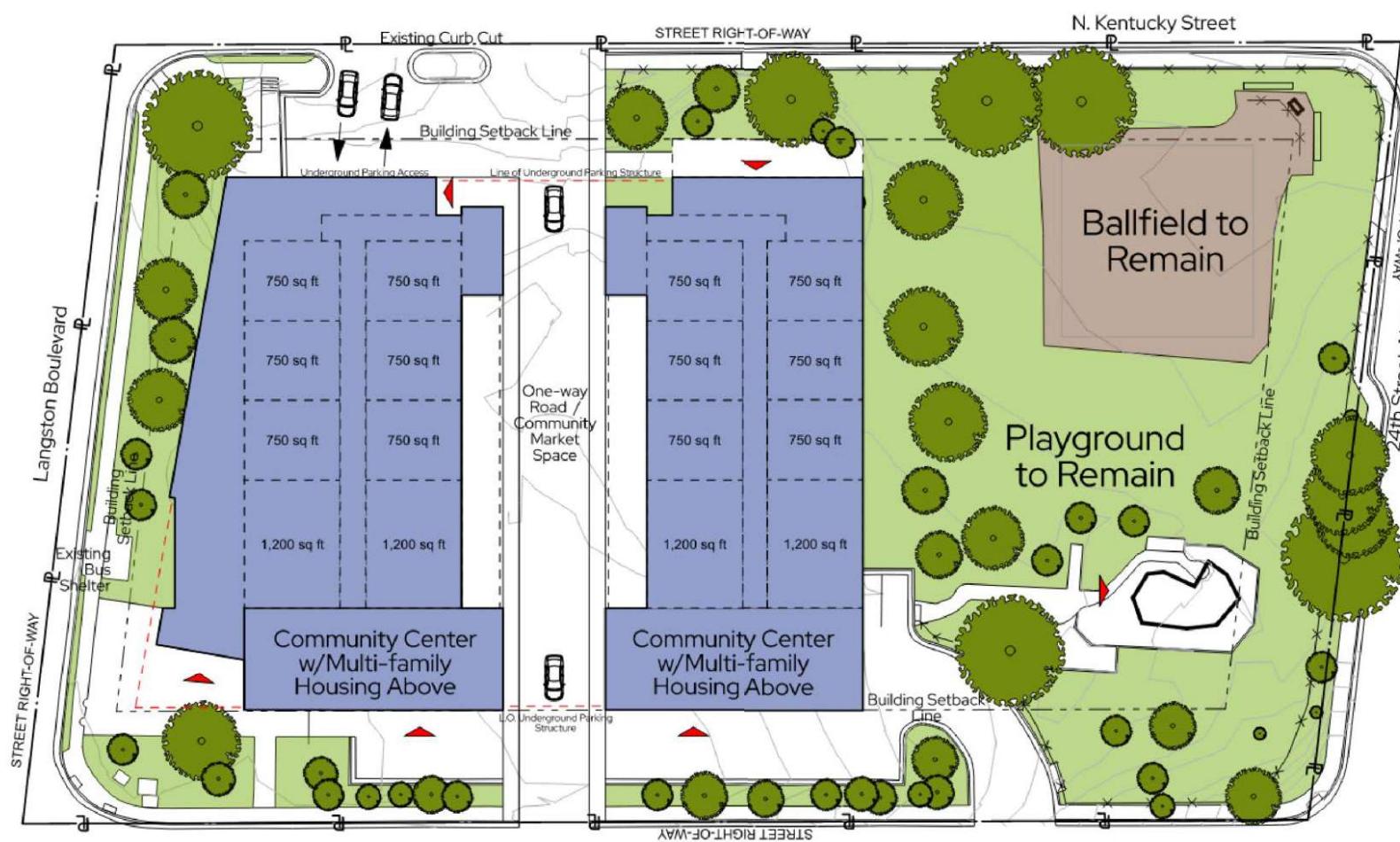
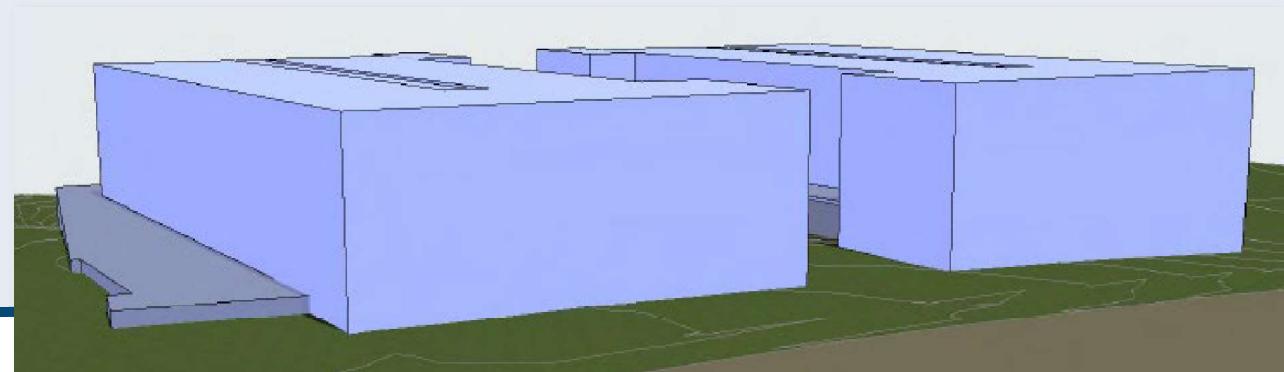
Option 3C



Key Priorities

- **Estimate: \$37.8M / Area: 57,575 GSF**
- All new construction, to best reflect County/ community, contemporary, generational needs
- Maximize use of available buildable area
- Provide affordable housing
- Balance built/open spaces
- Maximize stormwater retention
- Consider geothermal opportunities

Option 3D



Key Priorities

- **Estimate: \$58.5M / Area: 128,345 GSF**
- All new construction
- Maximize use of available buildable area
- Provide Affordable Housing
- Underground Parking
- Retain existing Ballfield and Playground

Costs Matrix

		EXISTING BUILDING		DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS							
		01		02		03					
		A	B	A	B	C	D				
LOWER LEVEL (LL)	--	--	--	--	--	21,445	--	--	--	35,000	
LEVEL 01 (L1)	8,210	8,345	9,280	13,610	15,255	20,330	22,690	26,625			
LEVEL 02 (L2)	7,535	7,445	8,645	7,130	10,145	20,330	18,455	22,240			
LEVEL 03 (L3)	--	--	--	3,330	10,145	18,305	16,430	22,240			
LEVEL 04 (L4) (Option 03D only)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	22,240			
	15,745	15,790	17,925	24,070	56,990	58,965	57,575	128,345			
	GSF	GSF	GSF	GSF	GSF	GSF	GSF	GSF			
COMPARATIVE "HARD" COST	\$4,369,000	\$7,634,000	\$10,629,000	\$18,828,000	\$26,947,000	\$26,481,000	\$40,957,000				
Contingencies (10% OF HARD COST)	\$436,900	\$763,400	\$1,062,900	\$1,882,800	\$2,694,700	\$2,648,100	\$4,095,700				
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$4,805,900	\$8,397,400	\$11,691,900	\$20,710,800	\$29,641,700	\$29,129,100	\$45,052,700				
Soft Costs (30% of Construction Cost)	\$1,441,770	\$2,519,220	\$3,507,570	\$6,213,240	\$8,892,510	\$8,738,730	\$13,515,810				
ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	\$6,247,670	\$10,916,620	\$15,199,470	\$26,924,040	\$38,534,210	\$37,867,830	\$58,568,510				

Questions?

